

C O N F I D E N T I A L

DD/A Registry

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15 FEB 1983

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Training and Education

VIA : Deputy Director for Administration

FROM : 25X1

SUBJECT : Introduction of Neurolinguistic Programming
Training to the Career Trainee Development
Program

1. I concur with the proposal to add Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP) training, on a trial presentation basis, to the Career Trainee Development Program.

2. My views about the substance of your 1 February 1983 memorandum about NLP training are principally these.

a. I see rapport, and the action necessary to establish rapport, differently from the view reflected in your memorandum. I may, therefore, have a different view of how instruction relating to establishing rapport might best be given. Although the NLP workshop highlights are sweepingly positive (and, therefore, in my view, generally the right approach to instruction), I am concerned by a fundamental difference in the definition of what it is -- rapport, or the process of establishing it -- that NLP Programming is to help establish. Rather than, as your memorandum states, seeing "rapport (or the process of establishing it) as reducing perceived differences between individuals" -- a negative definition arrived at by taking something away from a relationship -- I prefer the positive Webster definition which states that rapport is a "relation characterized by harmony, conformity, accord, or affinity." If the NLP instructional approach is based on a positive view of what is to be accomplished, rather than on the more negative approach which your definition suggests, I favor it.

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b. In my opinion, instruction about rapport-building should stress that it calls for the use of many traits, in various combinations, at various times with various people. These are traits with simple labels: sensitivity, tact, perceptiveness, subtlety, genuineness, humor, intellect, patience, articulateness -- and, of course, others. In order to apply those traits to constructing a framework of rapport requires, it seems to me, a willingness on the part of individuals to seek an identification of interests and feelings with others. I do not think that instruction about rapport-building needs to be festooned with technical jargon. Establishing rapport, and teaching it, can hardly be more than an adjunct of the less than exact field of behavioral science.

c. All of the above said, and repeating my view that rapport is the product of a series of positive rather than negative action impulses, I think that an aspect of rapport building has been taught by the Persuasion Skills (SAI) instruction given during the Operations Course (and the Military Operations Training Course). That is done by calling for an assessment of another's goals and, thereafter, bringing those goals into synchrony with the assessor's by using a logical process of expositing the benefits to be gained by taking a course of desired action. That calls for positive personal interaction, trust, confidence -- for the "harmony, conformity, accord or affinity" of Webster's "rapport."

3. My concurrence with the proposal to include NLP instruction in the CTDP on more than a trial basis will depend on answers to the following questions:

a. Has any professional psychologist in CIA been asked for a judgment about the value of the NLP technique? If so, has there been endorsement of the NLP technique as a generally valuable approach for the development of interpersonal relations? (Of 10 CIA psychologists asked to give an opinion of the NLP technique after I received your memorandum, nine had not heard of the technique; one had heard of NLP, but knew nothing of the nature of it except that it has little, if anything, to do with neurology.)

b. What will be dropped from the CTDP syllabus in order to add the NLP training?

c. After its presentation in the CTDP, is it seen by those to whom it was given as a potentially useful way to sharpen their interpersonal relations skills?

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4. Instruction in NLP techniques may well be an interesting and useful new addition to our CT training program. My principal concern about it is that by, as the NLP workshop summary states, being instructed in "how to read other persons...to establish almost instant rapport with virtually anyone...to identify someone's decision making style...to trigger selected moods and attitudes in others...(and) how to deal with this powerful technology" we will offer training in interpreting behavioral trappings which may take us away from the best assessment device that we can possess -- our own experience-tested instincts. One can be so sensitized to try to interpret eye movement, body language or speech mannerisms that the rapport building that we all engage in in various ways (and which is practiced extensively in the exercise activity of the Operations Course) may be made less effective than it otherwise might be. There is a hypothetical line that marks the greatest point of capability that we can reach in the development of our interpersonal skills. Instruction in NLP techniques may allow moving further toward that line than otherwise might be possible. Or, it may clutter, hinder or draw some back from the interpersonal skill level that they had already reached through instinct, intuition and interpretation of experience. In order to know whether instruction in NLP techniques will benefit more people than it will not benefit, I believe that it should be tried, as you propose.

25X1

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*I guess this is a
consensus.*

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